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Steeplechase Media
Develops Enhanced TV
The Documentary Channel

Santa Monica, CA.,

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Steeplechase Media, Inc., one of the only new media production companies specializing in creating interactive programming, announced that it has reached an agreement with **The Documentary Channel** to provide technology and content for "enhancing" the entire network. The Documentary Channel, which recently announced its plan to launch on digital tiers of cable systems in mid-1999, is one of the first networks to be conceived with "**Enhanced Television**" as a key component of its offering.

According to **Steeplechase Founder and Chairman Larry Namer** (Founder of E! Entertainment Television, Inc., formerly Movietime Channel, Inc.; Comspan Communications, Inc.; Recovery Network, Inc.; and several other successful entertainment ventures): "Assessing all of the issues necessary to create a network that is fully enhanced with additional features and interactive capabilities is a daunting challenge. However, being part of the network launch plan from this early stage gives us the opportunity to develop the approach from scratch rather than refitting it into an existing TV format. We will be able to achieve an almost seamless experience for those viewers with an enhanced TV-capable device (such as the **WebTV for Windows** feature of Windows 98, **WebTV Plus**, Intel's **InterCast**, and **Wink**). When each of the

creators of the linear TV space and the enhanced content space are actually working together, the viewer benefits from a tighter, more logical presentation."

Steeplechase has agreed to join the **Advanced Television Enhancement Forum (ATVEF)** to create the enhanced TV presentation in compliance with its Draft Specification. The cross-industry alliance of companies representing ATVEF is setting the standard necessary to create **HTML-enhanced television** content that can be uniformly broadcast across any network to any compliant receiver. Founding members include: Microsoft/WebTV Networks, Intel, NBC, Tribune, Sony, Warner Brothers, DirecTV, Disney, CNN, Cable Labs, and others.

"Companies like Steeplechase are taking a leadership position in the delivery of high-quality interactive programming," said **Steven Guggenheimer**, group product manager for Digital TV, Microsoft Corp. "The Documentary Channel's use of this new technology as part of its core programming strategy is very exciting for the entire industry. Microsoft has been a great believer in the educational benefits of interactive programming for consumers, and The Documentary Channel makes a logical starting point for demonstrating these benefits."

John Forbess, Chairman & CEO of The Documentary Channel added, "The documentary genre lends itself perfectly to enhancement. Many viewers watch documentaries for a richer television experience, and Enhanced TV can add additional enjoyment and depth. We see enhancing the network now as an opportunity to learn about the creative and business models that will be needed for the digital television age."

Steeplechase Media is creating the enhancements for transportation to the viewer via the vertical blanking interval ("VBI") of the TV signal. Viewer responses to polls, transaction processing, chat and e-mail will use the viewer's internet connection. When cable modems are widely available, bandwidth is broader, the enhancements will be more sophisticated and utilize the same internet connection to receive and deliver information. **Rick Portin**, former Executive Producer of Microsoft Interactive Television and a long time cable television industry veteran, is the **Executive Vice President of Steeplechase Media** and heads all of its daily operations. Previously, Mr. Portin was Vice President of

Production at E! and Director of Production at Viacom.

Steeplechase Media was formed in 1995 to create content and technology for PC/TV convergence.

ATVEF is a group of companies representing broadcast and cable networks, television stations, cable and satellite service providers, and the consumer electronics PC and software industries that have come together to create common standards for creating and delivering enhanced TV programs. ATVEF members include: Cable Labs, DCI Telecommunications, Inc. (OTC BB: DCTC), CNN, DirecTV Inc., Walt Disney Co. (NYSE: DIS), Intel Corporation (NASDAQ: INTC), Microsoft/WebTV Networks (NASDAQ: MSFT), NBC, Network Computer Inc., Public Broadcasting Service, Sony Corporation (NYSE: SNE), Tribune Company, and Warner Brothers.

The Documentary Channel is a newly formed digital cable network that will begin airing in Q2 1999. Featuring innovative and inspiring work of independent documentary filmmakers from around the world, that encompasses all subjects and topics, many of which have never been seen on television.

For more information, contact:

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